

**AMENDMENTS IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A data processor for reading content data from a continuous area on a storage medium and playing back video and/or audio based on the content data, the continuous area including a data area, in which the content data is stored, and a non-content-data area, in which the content data is not stored, the data processor comprising:

a reading control section for giving an instruction to read the content data of a predefined size from the data area and an instruction to start to play back the video and/or the audio based on the content data that has been read out;

a head for reading the content data from the data area in accordance with the instruction to read; and

a buffer memory for accumulating the content data that has been read, wherein the reading control section determines the predefined size by the amount of time it takes to skip the non-content-data area, reads the content data of the predefined size, accumulates the data of the predefined size in the buffer memory initially, and then gives an instruction to start to play back the content.

2. (Original) The data processor of claim 1, wherein the reading control section determines the predefined size by a data read rate at which the content data is read.

3. (Original) The data processor of claim 1, wherein the content data is encoded data representing the video and/or the audio, and

wherein the data processor further includes a decoding section for reading the content data of the predefined size from the buffer memory and decoding the content data in accordance with the instructions given by the reading control section.

4. (Original) The data processor of claim 1, wherein the minimum area length of the continuous area is determined by a data read rate, which has been defined based on a required data rate to play back the content and on a unit time to perform the playback, and by the size of extra data to be accumulated

in the buffer memory, and

wherein the size of the extra data is determined by a data size, which has been defined on the longest seek time it takes to reach the next continuous area and a data rate required for playback during the longest seek time, and by the predefined size.

5. (Previously Presented) The data processor of claim 1, wherein the non-content-data area includes at least one of a defective area, of which the area length corresponds to at most a permissible defect rate for the continuous area, and a data area including data other than the content data.

6. (Previously Presented) The data processor of claim 5, wherein the continuous area has an area length that is at least equal to the minimum area length.

7. (Currently Amended) A data processor for reading content data from a continuous area on a storage medium and playing back video and/or audio based on the content data, the continuous area including a data area, in which the content data is stored, and a non-content-data area, in which the content data is not stored, the data processor comprising:

a reading control section for giving an instruction to read the content data from the data area for a predetermined period of time and an instruction to start to play back the video and/or the audio based on the content data that has been read out;

a head for reading the content data from the data area in accordance with the instruction to read; and

a buffer memory for accumulating the content data that has been read,

wherein the reading control section determines the predetermined period of time by the amount of time it takes to skip the non-content-data area, reads the content data for the predetermined period of time, accumulates the data read for the predetermined period of time in the buffer memory initially, and then gives an instruction to start to play back the content.

8. (Currently Amended) A data processing method for reading content data from a continuous area on a storage medium and playing back video and/or audio based on the content data, the continuous area including a data area, in which the content data is stored, and a non-content-data area, in which the content data is not stored, the method comprising the steps of:

giving an instruction to read the content data of a predefined size from the data area;

reading the content data from the data area in accordance with the instruction to read;

accumulating the content data that has been read in a buffer memory; and

giving an instruction to start to play back the video and/or the audio based on the content data,

wherein the step of giving an instruction to read includes determining the predefined size by the amount of time it takes to skip the non-content-data area, and

wherein the step of giving an instruction to start to play back includes accumulating the content data of the predefined size by performing the step of accumulating the content data of the predefined size in the buffer memory initially, and then giving the instruction to start to play back.

9. (Original) The data processing method of claim 8, wherein the step of giving an instruction to read includes determining the predefined size by a data read rate at which the content data is read.

10. (Original) The data processing method of claim 8, wherein the content data is encoded data representing the video and/or the audio, and

wherein the method further includes the step of decoding the content data.

11. (Currently Amended) The data processing method of claim 8, wherein the minimum area length of the continuous area is determined by a read data size, which has been defined based on a required data rate to play back the content and on a unit

time to perform the playback, and by the size of extra data to be accumulated in the buffer memory, and

wherein the size of the extra data is determined by a data size, which has been defined on the longest seek time it takes to reach the next continuous area and a data rate [20] required for playback during the longest seek time, and by the predefined size.

12. (Previously Presented) The data processing method of claim 11, wherein the continuous area has an area length that is at least equal to the minimum area length.

13. (Original) The data processing method of claim 8, wherein the non-content-data area includes at least one of a defective area, of which the area length corresponds to at most a permissible defect rate for the continuous area, and a data area including data other than the content data.

14. (Currently Amended) A data processing method for reading content data from a continuous area on a storage medium and playing back video and/or audio based on the content data, the continuous area including a data area, in which the content data is stored, and a non-content-data area, in which the content data is not stored, the method comprising the steps of:

giving an instruction to read the content data from the data area for a predetermined period of time;

giving an instruction to start to play back the video and/or the audio based on the content data that has been read;

reading the content data from the data area in accordance with the instruction to read; and

accumulating the content data that has been read,

wherein the step of giving an instruction to read includes determining the predetermined period of time by the amount of time it takes to skip the non-content-data area, and

wherein the step of giving an instruction to start to play back includes reading the content data for the predetermined period of time and accumulating the content data

read for the predetermined period of time in the buffer memory initially by performing the step of accumulating, and then giving the instruction to start to play back the content.